DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 182 258 SP 014 093

AUTHOR Weber, Margaret B.
TITLE The Relationship Between Teachers' Stereotypic Sex Role Attitudes and Related Behaviors Toward Students.
PUB DATE Apr 78
NOTE 16p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Behavior Patterns; Sex Role; *Sex Stereotypes; *Student Attitudes; Student Teacher Relationship; *Teacher Attitudes; Teacher Behavior; *Teacher Influence

ABSTRACT

The Vance Richards Verbal Fluency Test was utilized to study the sex role attitudes of 33 female students enrolled in either undergraduate or graduate teacher education programs. A specially developed classroom simulation instrument and direct classroom observations were also used in an attempt to determine the degree to which teachers' attitudes towards sex roles affect the attitudes of their students. Results suggest that teachers' stereotypic sex role attitudes may not be related to actual in-class behavior, that the relationships between attitudes and behaviors are not consistent across high and low stereotypic groups, and that sex role attitudes do not appear to be related to grade level specialty. (Author/LH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED182258

The Relationship Between Teachers' Stereotypic Sex Role Attitudes and Related Behaviors Toward Students

Margaret B. Weber

Emory University

April 1978

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Margaret B. Weber

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

SP014093

How children learn what is expected, desirable and appropriate for different sex roles is a subject of considerable debate. Neither the psychoanalytic, social-learning nor the cognitive development model account for all sex-role stereotyping (Guttentab and Bray, 1976). However, despite this debate, considerable research indicates that children learn most sex-role behaviors early (e.g., Kohlberg, 1966; Stein and Smithells, 1969). Further, research demonstrating differential interaction patterns for teachers with boys and girls (Meyer and Thompson, 1956; Jackson and Lahaderne, 1967; Serbin, O'Leary, Kent and Tonick, 1973) suggests that teachers contribute to the early development of sex-role behaviors in children despite awareness of societal concerns about sexism (Guttentag and Bray, 1976,18).

Despite numerous studies of concrete sex role related behaviors of teachers and students in the classroom, there is little information available on the relationship between sex role attitudes of teachers and their sex role related behaviors toward students. Thus, the purpose of this study was to examine this relationship. In addition, the consistency of these relationships across high and low stereotypic feminine teachers was examined. Finally, the relationship between stereotypic feminine sex-role attitudes and behaviors with teachers' grade level assignments was examined.

Method

Sample

Thirty-three white females, enrolled in either undergraduate or graduate teacher education programs at a private southern university volunteered to participate in this study. All the subjects were less than forty years of age. Nineteen were married and three reported having children. Ten subjects were undergraduate preservice seniors. Of the twenty-three subjects enrolled in advanced degree programs, thirteen had less than nine years of teaching experience. Twenty subjects were preservice elementary education majors.

Instrumentation

Attitude Measures. The Vance Richards Verbal Fluency Test (KR_{20} = .65) was developed as a projective sentence completion instrument (following Getzels and Walsh, 1958). Forty-nine items were derived and scored based on feminine stereotypic characteristics reported by Broverman, et al (1970), and Maccoby and Jacklin (1974). The test items measured stereotypic feminine characteristics such as nurturance, passivity and dependence.

An example of a nurturance item is:

When Billy is late coming home, his mother _____

_____.

_____

If the response was "worried," for example, the item was scored stereotypic feminine as that response indicates nurturance behavior.

If the response was "didn't worry," the item was scored not stereotypic feminine. The total score for the Vance Richards was the number of stereotypic feminine responses (following Broverman, et al, 1970; Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974).

A classroom simulation instrument was developed (KR_{20} = .81) to measure the teachers' proclivity to assign stereotypic roles to children. This measure of intentional behaviors included brief descriptions of thirty-two students (sixteen girls and sixteen boys) and of a social studies unit on careers. The sample was asked to assign individual students to forty specified career roles. Any female named to a stereotypic feminine career role such as nurse, librarian, or elementary school teacher was scored as a stereotypic feminine role assignment. The total score for each subject was the number of stereotypic feminine career role assignments (following Broverman, et al, 1970; Maccoby and Jacklin, 1974).

Behavioral Observations. Direct classroom observations were made to examine six variables which could be construed as reflecting typical feminine and masculine behaviors: "Recognition of Female Volunteers," "Directed Questioning of Females," "Positive Responses to Student Answers," "Giving Directions," "Lecturing," and "Justifying Authority." The first two categories were designed to reflect teacher reinforcement of female participation in learning. The third category reflected nurturing behavior. These three categories were considered to reflect stereotypic feminine behaviors. The fourth, fifth, and sixth categories, Giving Directions, Lecturing and Justifying Authority served as indicators of

authoritarian teacher types (Flanders, 1970). These are consistent with stereotypic masculine characteristics reported by Broverman, et al (1970).

Procedures

This study took place during April and May, 1977. The data gathering events were scheduled to reduce bias in the responses to subsequent measures. The Vance Richards, introduced as a verbal fluency test in an attempt to disguise the projective nature of the instrument, was administered by the experimenter during the first week of the study. The sample was urged to complete the instrument as quickly as possible.

Classroom Observations were made during the second, third, and fourth weeks. Each subject was observed for a minimum of twenty minutes during instruction. Both event sampling and time sampling were used. Interrater reliability of 90 percent agreement among seven observers was obtained prior to this study. This level of reliability was maintained throughout the study.

The Classroom Simulation was mailed to each subject after all observations had been completed. This instrument was returned by mail to the experimenter.

Hypotheses

In order to examine the relationship between the stereotypic sex-role attitudes of teachers and their behaviors, the following hypothesis was tested:

H_1: There are significant [1] positive relationships between teachers' stereotypic sex-role attitudes and their sex-role related behaviors toward students.

In order to examine the relationship between stereotypic sex-role attitudes and grade level assignments the following hypothesis was tested:

H_2: There are significant relationships between stereotypic feminine sex-role attitudes and grade level specialty.

Results and Discussion

Hypothesis One

No significant relationship between stereotypic sex-role attitudes and sex-role related behaviors toward students were reported (see Table 1). Thus, H_1 was rejected.

Insert Table 1 About Here

A significant positive relationship was reported between the Vance Richards and the Classroom Simulation instruments and between two pairs of teachers' sex-role related behaviors toward students. The subjects tended to respond to the projective instrument in ways consistent with their intentional behaviors regarding sex-role assignments as measured by the Classroom Simulation instrument. The significant negative relationships reported between Justifying Authority and either Giving Directions or Lecturing suggests that

these three variables do not reflect a single masculine stereotype as was assumed (following Flanders, 1970 and Broverman, et al, 1970).

Further examination of these data indicates consistency across dichotomized high and low stereotypic feminine groups with regard to intervariable relationships. A median split (md - 22.38) based on Vance Richards scores was used to dichotomize the high and low stereotypic feminine groups. Pearson product moment correlations were then calculated within each group. Finally, Fisher r to z transformations were done to allow direct comparisons between groups (see Tables 2 and 3).

Insert Table 2 About Here

Insert Table 3 About Here

No significant differences between correlation coefficients for these two groups were obtained among either attitude measures or behavior measures across groups.

Examination of the relationships among the sex-role attitude instruments for both high and low stereotypic groups indicate a degree of consistency in expressed attitudes between the Vance Richards and the Classroom Simulation only among low stereotypic subjects. In contrast, the high stereotypic subjects evidenced no significant relationships among these attitude variables. This suggests that the high stereotypic teachers controlled their stereotypic sex-role intentional behaviors.

Hypothesis Two

In order to test H_2, zero-order correlations between grade level specialty and stereotypic feminine sex-role attitudes were calculated. As reported in Table 4, neither of the sex-role attitude measures were significantly correlated with grade level specialty. Thus, H_2 is rejected.

Conclusions

In summary, the results of this study suggest that teachers' stereotypic sex-role attitudes may not be related to actual in-class behaviors. Further, relationships between attitudes and behaviors are not consistent across high and low stereotypic groups. In fact, teachers with high stereotypic feminine sex-role attitudes appear to have control over sex-role stereotypic career role assignments for students. Finally, stereotypic sex-role attitudes do not appear to be related to grade level specialty.

The results of this study lend supportive evidence to Guttentag and Bray's (1976) conclusion that teachers are well aware of sex-role stereotypy. The participants in this study possess some degree of stereotypic feminine sex-role attitudes, yet appear to be in control of sex-role related behaviors toward students. Such awareness and control may well militate against projecting sex-role stereotypes to their students.

References

Broverman, I. K., Vogel, S. R., Broverman, D. M., Clarkson, F. E., and Rosenkrantz, P. S. Sex-role stereotypes and clinical judgment of mental health. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 1970, 34, 1-7.

Flanders, N. A. Analyzing teaching behavior. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1970.

Getzels, J., and Walsh, J. J. The method of paired direct and projective questionnaires in the study of attitude structure and socialization. Psychological Monographs: General and Applied, 1958, 72, 1-34.

Guttentag, M., and Bray, H. Undoing sex stereotypes. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1976.

Jackson, P. W., and Lahaderne, H. M. Inequalities of teacher-pupil contacts. Psychology in the Schools, 1967, 4, 204-211.

Kohlberg, L. A. A cognitive developmental analysis of children's sex role concepts and attitudes. In Maccoby, E. (ed.), The development of sex differences. Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 1966.

Meyer, W., and Thompson, G. Sex differences in the distribution of teacher approval and disapproval among sixth grade children. Journal of Educational Psychology, 1956, 47, 385-396.

Ricks, F., and Pyke, S. Teacher perceptions and attitudes that foster or maintain sex-role differences. Interchange, 1973, 4, 26-33.

Serbin, L., O'Leary, K. D., Kent, R., and Tonick, I. A comparison of teacher response to the preacademic and problem behavior of boys and girls. Child Development, 1973, 44, 796-804.

Stein, A. H., and Smithells, J. Age and sex difference in children's sex-role standards about achievement. Developmental Psychology, 1969, 1, 252.

Footnotes

[1]Each hypothesis is tested at $\alpha = .05$.

Table 1

Zero Order Correlations Between Stereotypic Sex-Role Attitudes and Related Behaviors

(N = 33)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
(1) Vance Richards	22.48	4.34	1.00							
(2) Classroom Simulation	20.58	6.05	.32*	1.00						
(3) Recognition of Female Volunteers	.41	.24	.14	.06	1.00					
(4) Directed Questioning of Females	.38	.33	.12	.03	.29	1.00				
(5) Positive Responses to Student Answers	.74	.32	.05	.01	-.09	-.01	1.00			
(6) Giving Directions	.15	.15	.05	-.06	.31	.25	.13	1.00		
(7) Lecturing	.20	.48	.30	-.10	.26	.15	-.03	-.17	1.00	
(8) Justifying Authority	.02	.03	.14	-.00	-.01	.03	-.62**	-.46*	.24	1.00

*Significant at .05

**Significant at .01

Table 2

Zero Order Correlations and Fisher r to z Transformations Among Attitude and Behavior Measures for the High Stereotypic Feminine Group

(N = 17)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
(1) Vance Richards	23.71	2.87		.16	-.03	.06	.13	-.38	.81	.16
(2) Classroom Simulation	31.94	.28	.16		-.01	-.01	-.22	.10	-.20	.02
(3) Recognition of Female Volunteers	.45	.26	-.03	-.01		.39	.00	.41	.30	.13
(4) Directed Questioning of Females	.38	.34	.06	-.10	.37		-.01	.36	.19	.06
(5) Giving Directions	.72	.36	.13	-.22	.00	-.01		.22	.03	-.77
(6) Positive Responses	.18	.18	-.37	.10	.39	.34	.22		-.17	-.62
(7) Lecturing	.20	.67	.67**	-.19	.29	.19	.03	-.17		.24
(8) Justifying Authority	.03	.03	.16	.02	-.13	.06	-.64**	-.15*	.23	

*Significant at .05

**Significant at .01

Table 3

Zero Order Correlations and Fisher r to z Transformations Among Attitude and Behavior Measures for the Low Stereotypic Feminine Group

(N = 16)

	Mean	Standard Deviation	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
(1) Vance Richards	19.06	2.67		.54	.03	.33	.29	.21	-.16	-.07
(2) Classroom Simulation	30.19	9.04	.49*		.11	.13	.34	-.10	.28	-.20
(3) Recognition of Female Volunteers	.37	.21	.03	.11		.20	-.27	.05	.35	.11
(4) Directed Questioning of Females	.37	.32	.32	.12	.20		-.00	.11	.14	-.02
(5) Giving Directions	.77	.28	.28	.33	-.22	-.00		.00	-.45	-.65
(6) Positive Responses	.12	.10	.21	-.10	.05	.11	.00		-.34	-.47
(7) Lecturing	.19	.14	-.16	.27	.34	.14	-.42	-.32		.51
(8) Justifying Authority	.02	.03	-.07	-.19	.11	-.02	-.58**	-.43*	-.47*	

*Significant at .05

**Significant at .01

Table 4

Zero Order Correlations Between Attitude

and Grade Level Specialty

(N = 33)

	Grade Level Specialty
Vance Richards	.12
Classroom Simulation	-.23